

**REMARKS**

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4 and 7-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP05-002385 ("JP 2385"). By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, canceled claims 1, 4, and 7 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein, and added new claim 14. Claims 3 and 8-14 are currently pending in the above-captioned patent application.

Applicants have amended claim 10 to recite, among other things, "non-elastic metallic engaging projections provided in said first connector section" (Emphasis added). Support for Applicants' changes to claim 10 may be found, for example, in Applicants' specification at page 8, line 27 through page 9, line 11 and in Figure 2A.

In addition, claims 9 and 11, as amended, recite nubs "projecting away from said first connector section." Support for the changes to claims 9 and 11 may be found, for example, in Applicants' specification at page 8, line 27 through page 9, line 11 and in Figure 2A.

**Claim 10**

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2385. Claim 10 is not anticipated by JP 2385 because the reference fails to teach each and every element of the claim. (See M.P.E.P § 2131 (8<sup>th</sup> ed. 2001)). In particular, JP 2385 at least fails to teach "non-elastic metallic engaging projections provided in said first connector section" as recited in amended claim 10.

JP 2385 discloses an engagement hole 4 drilled in a central piece 3 of a splicing fitting 2. (See JP 2385 at ¶ 0005; Figure 1.) In the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that the edges of hole 4 correspond to the claimed “engagement portion” (See Office Action, at page 3.) Applicants disagree.

As illustrated, for example, in Figures 1 and 2 of JP 2385, hole 4 does not include projections. Rather, the edges of hole 4 appear smooth. Accordingly, hole 4 does not constitute “non-elastic metallic engaging projections provided in said first connector section,” as recited in amended claim 10. For at least this reason, claim 10 is allowable over JP 2385.

**Claims 3, 8, 9, and 11-13**

In the Office Action, the Examiner apparently contends that part of leg portion 5 of JP 2385 corresponded to the “nibs” recited in claims 9 and 11. (See Office Action at page 3.) Applicants respectfully disagree and traverse the rejection of claims 3, 8, 9, and 11-13. The American Heritage College Dictionary, for example, defines “nib” as “a sharp point or tip.” (American Heritage College Dictionary at 920 (3d. ed. 1997) attached hereto.) The part of leg portion 5 labeled by the Examiner as a “nib” (in Figure A at page 3 of the Office Action) does not have any sharp points or tips, or any other similar structure for that matter. Moreover, the surfaces that the Examiner alleges correspond to the claimed nibs do not project away from connector 1 of JP 2385. Accordingly, Applicants submit that JP 2385 does not teach the claimed “nibs projecting away from said first connector section.”

For at least these reasons, JP 2385 fails to disclose all the elements recited by claim 9 and thus is allowable over JP 2385. Claim 11, while of a different scope than claim 9, also recites "nibs of a non-elastic metallic holding fixture... said nibs projecting away from said first connector section," and is allowable over the applied reference for at least the reasons set forth above. Claims 3, 8, and 12 depend from claim 9 and are allowable at least due to this dependence. Claim 13 is allowable at least due to its dependence from claim 11.

In addition, new claim 14 depends from allowable claim 11 and Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to allow claim 14.

**Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of pending claims 3 and 8-14.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: August 15, 2005

By:   
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Reg. No. 34,731

**Attachment: Page 920 of The American Heritage College Dictionary (3d ed. 1997).**

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Isaac Newton  
c. 1726 painting by an  
unknown artist

New Zealand

**news·pa·per** (nōōz'pā'pər, nyōōz'pā'pər) *n.* 1. A publication, usu. issued daily or weekly, containing current news, editorials, feature articles, and usu. advertising. 2. See **newsprint**.

**news·pa·per·ing** (nōōz'pā'pər-īng, nyōōz'pā'pər-īng) *n.* Journalism.

**news·pa·per·man** (nōōz'pā'pər-mān', nyōōz'pā'pər-mān') *n.* 1. A man who owns or publishes a newspaper. 2. A man who is a newspaper reporter, writer, or editor.

**news·pa·per·wom·an** (nōōz'pā'pər-wōm'an, nyōōz'pā'pər-wōm'an) *n.* 1. A woman who owns or publishes a newspaper. 2. A woman who is a newspaper reporter, writer, or editor.

**new·speak** (nōōz'spēk', nyōōz'spēk') *n.* Deliberately ambiguous and contradictory language used to mislead and manipulate the public. [*< Newspeak, a language invented by George Orwell in the novel 1984.*]

**news·per·son** (nōōz'pūr'sən, nyōōz'pūr'sən) *n.* A newsman or a newswoman.

**news·print** (nōōz'prīnt', nyōōz'prīnt') *n.* Inexpensive paper made from wood pulp and used chiefly for printing newspapers.

**news·reel** (nōōz'rēl', nyōōz'rēl') *n.* A short film dealing with recent or current events.

**news release** *n.* A prepared publicity or news announcement.

**news·room** (nōōz'rōōm', -rōōm', nyōōz'rōōm') *n.* A room, as in a newspaper office, where news stories are written and edited.

**news·stand** (nōōz'stānd', nyōōz'stānd') *n.* An open booth or stand at which newspapers and periodicals are sold.

**New Style** *n.* The current method of reckoning the months and days of the year according to the Gregorian calendar.

**New Swe·den** (swēd'n) *n.* A Swedish colony (1638–55) in North America along the Delaware R.

**news·week·ly** (nōōz'wēk'lē, nyōōz'wēk'lē) *n., pl. -lies.* A weekly newsmagazine or newspaper that reports current events.

**news·wom·an** (nōōz'wōm'an, nyōōz'wōm'an) *n.* A woman who gathers, reports, or edits news.

**news·wor·thy** (nōōz'wūr'thē, nyōōz'wūr'thē) *adj. -thi·er, -thi·est.* Of sufficient interest or importance to the public to warrant reporting in the media. — **news'wor'thi·ness** *n.*

**news·y** (nōōz'zē, nyōōz'zē) *adj. -i·er, -i·est.* Informal. Full of news; informative. — **news'y·i·ness** *n.*

**newt** (nōōt, nyōōt) *n.* Any of several small, often brightly colored semiaquatic salamanders of the genus *Triturus* and related genera. [ME *neute* < the phrase *an eute*, var. of *evete* < OE *elete*.]

**New Testament** *n. Bible.* 1. The Gospels, Acts, Pauline and other Epistles, and the Book of Revelation, together viewed by Christians as forming the record of the new dispensation belonging to the Church. 2. See **table at Bible**.

**New Thought** *n.* A modern religious movement that emphasizes spiritual healing and positive thought.

**new·ton** (nōōt'n, nyōōt'n) *n.* In the meter-kilogram-second system, the unit of force required to accelerate a mass of one kilogram one meter per second per second, equal to 100,000 dynes. See **table at measurement**. [After Sir Isaac Newton.]

**New·ton** (nōōt'n, nyōōt'n) 1. A city of S-central KS N of Wichita; settled by Mennonites in the 1870's. Pop. 16,700. 2. A city of E MA, a suburb of Boston. Pop. 82,585.

**Newton, Sir Isaac.** 1642–1727. English mathematician and scientist who invented differential calculus and formulated the theories of universal gravitation, terrestrial mechanics, and color. — **New·to'ni·an** *adj.*

**new town** *n.* A planned urban community designed for self-sufficiency.

**New·town** (nōō'toun', nyōōt'n) 1. A town of SW CT on the Housatonic R. ENE of Danbury. Pop. 20,779.

**new wave** *n.* 1. Often **New Wave**. A movement in French cinema in the 1960's that abandoned traditional narrative techniques in favor of greater use of discontinuity and abstraction. 2. An avant-garde or experimental movement, as in the arts. [Transl. of Fr. *nouvelle vague*: *nouvelle*, new + *vague*, wave.]

**New West·min·ster** (wēst-min'stər) 1. A city of SW British Columbia; Canada, a suburb of Vancouver on the Fraser R.; cap. of the province (1860–66). Pop. 38,550.

**New World** (wōrld). The Western Hemisphere. The term was first used by the Italian historian Peter Martyr (1457–1526), whose *De Rebus Oceanicis et Novo Orbe* (1516) chronicled the discovery of America.

**New Year** *n.* The first day or days of the calendar year.

**New Year's Day** (yīrz) *n.* January 1, the first day of the year, celebrated as a holiday in many countries.

**New Year's Eve** (yīrz) *n.* The eve of New Year's Day.

**New York** (yōrk). 1. A state of the NE U.S.; admitted as one of the original Thirteen Colonies in 1788. Cap. Albany. Pop. 18,044,505. 2. Or **New York City**. A city of S NY on New York Bay at the mouth of the Hudson R. Founded by the Dutch as New Amsterdam, it includes the boroughs of Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten I. Pop. 7,322,564. — **New York'er** *n.*

**New York aster** *n.* A wild aster (*Aster novi-belgii*) of eastern North America with pointed leaves and bluish-violet flowers.

**New York Bay**. An arm of the Atlantic at the mouth of the Hudson R. between W Long I. and NE NJ divided into Upper New York Bay and Lower New York Bay by the Narrows.

**New York State Barge Canal**. A system of inland waterways,

c. 845 km (525 mi), traversing NY and connecting the Great Lakes with the Hudson R. and Lake Champlain.

**New Zea·land** (zē'land). An island country in the S Pacific SE of Australia; set off from Australia in 1841, received dominion status in 1907, and achieved full independence from Great Britain in 1931. Cap. Wellington. Pop. 3,265,300. — **New Zea'land·er** *n.*

**NEX** *abbr.* Navy exchange.

**next** (nēkst) *adj.* 1. Nearest in space or position; adjacent: *the next room*. 2. Immediately following, as in time, order, or sequence: *next week*. — *adv.* 1. In the time, order, or place nearest or immediately following: *our next oldest child*. 2. On the first subsequent occasion: *when I write next*. — *n.* The next person or thing: *The next will be better*. — *idiom.* **next to**. 1. Adjacent to. 2. Following in order or degree. 3. Almost; practically. [ME *nexte* < OE *neahsta*, *neahst*, superl. of *neah*, near. See *nēhw-iz*.]

**next door** *adv.* To or in the adjacent house, building, apartment, or room. — **next'·door'** (nēkst'dōr', -dōr') *adj.*

**next friend** *n.* Law. A person appointed by or admitted to a court to act in behalf of a minor or other party under legal disability.

**next of kin** *n., pl. next of kin*. 1. The person or persons most closely related by blood to another person. 2. Law. a. The closest relative of a deceased person. b. (*used with a pl. v.*) The closest blood relatives entitled to share in the personal property of one who dies intestate.

**nex·us** (nēk'ss) *n., pl. nex·us or -us·es*. 1. A means of connection; a link or tie. 2. A connected series or group. 3. The core or center. [Lat., p.p. of *nectere*, to bind. See *ned-*.]

**Ney** (nā), Michel. 1769–1815. French commander of the rear guard in Napoleon I's retreat from Moscow (1812).

**Nez Perce** (nēz' pūr's, nēs') also **Nez Per·cé** (pər-sā') *n., pl.*

**Nez Perce** or **Nez Per·ces** (pūr'siz) also **Nez Percé** or **Nez Per·cés** (-sāz'). 1. A member of a Native American people formerly inhabiting the lower Snake River and its tributaries, with present-day populations in western Idaho and northeast Washington. 2. The Sahaptian language of the Nez Perce. [Fr. *Nez-Percé*: *nez*, nose + *percé*, pierced.]

**NF** *abbr.* 1. N.F. National Formulary. 2. Neurofibromatosis.

**3.** Newfoundland.

**nff** *abbr.* No funds.

**NFC** *abbr.* Sports. National Football Conference.

**NFL** *abbr.* Sports. National Football League.

**Nfld.** *abbr.* Newfoundland.

**NG** or **N.G.** *abbr.* 1. National Guard. 2. No good. 3. Natural gas.

**Nga·mi** (ang-gā'mē), Lake. A marshy lake of N Botswana N of the Kalahari Desert.

**n'ga·na** (nā-gā'nā) *n.* Var. of **nagana**.

**NGF** *abbr.* Nerve growth factor.

**ngul·trum** (ang-gūl'trām) *n.* See **table at currency**. [Bhutanese.]

**Ngu·ni** (ang-gōō'nē) *n., pl. Nguni* or **-nīs**. 1. A member of a group of peoples of southern and southeast Africa, including the Swazi, Ndebele, Xhosa, and Zulu. 2. Any of the Bantu languages of the Nguni.

**ngwee** (ang-gwē') *n., pl. ngwee*. See **table at currency**. [Nyanja, bright, ngwee.]

**NH** or **N.H.** *abbr.* New Hampshire.

**NHI** *abbr.* National Health Insurance.

**NHL** *abbr.* Sports. National Hockey League.

**NHS** *abbr.* National Health Service.

**Ni** The symbol for the element nickel 1.

**ni·a·cīn** (nī'ā-sīn) *n.* A white crystalline acid, C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>4</sub>NCOOH, that is a component of the vitamin B complex, found in meat, wheat germ, dairy products, and yeast and used to treat and prevent pellagra. [ni(cotinic) ac(id) + -in.]

**Ni·ag·a·ra** (nī-āg'rā, -rā) *n.* A torrent or flood. [After 'Niagara (Falls)'.]

**Niagara Falls**<sup>1</sup>. Falls in the Niagara R. between the cities of Niagara Falls NY and Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada; divided by Goat I. into the American Falls, 50.9 m (167 ft), and the Canadian, or Horseshoe, Falls, 48.2 m (158 ft).

**Niagara Falls**<sup>2</sup>. 1. A city of SE Ontario, Canada, on the Niagara R. opposite Niagara Falls NY. Pop. 70,960. 2. A city of W NY on the Niagara R. NNW of Buffalo. Pop. 61,840.

**Niagara River**. A river flowing c. 55 km (34 mi) from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario.

**Nia·mēy** (nē-ā'mā, nyā-mā'). The cap. of Niger, in the SW part of the Niger R. Pop. 399,100.

**nib** (nīb) *n.* 1. a. The sharpened point of a quill pen. b. A tapered point of a pen, for insertion into a penholder or a fountain pen. 2. A sharp point or tip. 3. A bird's beak or bill. [Alteration of *neb*.]

**nib·ble** (nīb'əl) *v. -bled, -bling, -bles. -tr. 1.* To bite at gently and repeatedly. 2. To eat with small quick bites or in small morsels: *nibble a cracker*. 3. To wear away or diminish bit by bit. — *intr.* To take small or hesitant bites. — *n.* 1. A very small quantity, esp. of food; a morsel. 2. The act or an instance of nibbling. [ME *nebyllen*; akin to LGer. *nibbelen*.]

**Ni·be·lung** (nē'bē-lōōng') *n. Myth.* 1. Any of a race of dwarfs